



25 February 2015

Queensland Ombudsman  
GPO Box 3314  
BRISBANE QLD 4001

Dear Ombudsman

**Unlawful Assault of Inmate Peter Phillip Nash (E27926) by GEO Correctional Staff – Arthur Corrie Correctional Centre – 5 May 2014**

We act on behalf of Mr Nash. Mr Nash was viciously assaulted by GEO Correctional Staff acting in their capacity as the Special Response Team ('SRT') on 5 May 2014 whilst on remand awaiting extradition to the United States.

Attached to this letter is contemporaneous correspondence in the hand of Mr Nash dated 6 May 2014 detailing the circumstances of the assault. Also attached is a letter in the hand of Mr Nash addressed to the General Manager of the Centre that was sent after Mr Nash's extradition. The delivery of the letter was delayed from fear of reprisal. Finally, we attach a letter from our office to the General Manager of the Centre dated 9 September 2014 seeking clarification as to what, if any, action had been undertaken in relation to investigating the assault. We understand that numerous inmates were unlawfully assaulted on that particular day and that numerous complaints were made to various agencies.

To date we have received no response whatsoever from the Centre itself nor any entity, Government or otherwise, responsible for the management of the Centre. This is despite the former Attorney General having made comments in the media that this matter would be thoroughly investigated.

Accordingly, we are instructed by Mr Nash to respectfully request that your office conduct an investigation into this matter if you have not already done so. If you have an investigation underway, would you kindly inform this office as to the status of that investigation and if there has been any action taken against those involved, GEO or any other responsible entity so that such incidents are less likely to occur again in the future.

We look forward to receiving your response. If you have any queries or require further information please do not hesitate to contact the writer.

Yours faithfully

Karl Brandon  
Principal Lawyer  
**Karl Brandon & Associates**

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Merrimac QLD 4226  
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6<sup>th</sup> May 14

Hi Karl,

Yesterday evening I was bashed by a load of scows in riot gear for what I suspect was their sport entertainment. Apparently some inmates got onto the roof of one of the units yesterday so they locked the whole jail down early afternoon. Later in the afternoon / early evening I could hear one hell of a commotion on the landing below, lots of shouting and crying out in pain which was the riot squad bashing and extracting someone from their cell. Then one of the riot squad came up onto my landing and started issuing threats of violence and someone made a comment calling the scow a "maggot". The scow decided that it had come from my cell and deserve my protests but I didn't said anything I soon had about 5 scows giving me a good working over, punching me in the head, kicking and punching me in the ribs and after putting handcuffs on me making sure my head came into contact with as many door frames and hard surfaces as possible. After dragging me up to the holding cells near the stores by forcing me in half so my head was almost between my knees making it nearly impossible to walk without causing a lot of pain I was left in a cell for several hours with others they had seemingly picked at random and beaten the shit out of.

After a few hours I was returned to my unit and put back in my cell, I am unsure if I will get taken to the DMU today or if that's an end to it. The reason I am writing to you is because I was a formal record of what has happened and after I go to the US you can follow up on my complaint if you want to. I do not want to make a complaint now because it will probably get me bashed again and I do not want to waste any chance I may have of seeing Claire again before I get extradited.

This place has destroyed what little faith I may have had in the criminal justice system in Queensland, I now have first hand

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...of why many people who come into contact with  
it have the same, the same and arguing to do with the  
prison system itself. Most of the staff have no idea what the  
real things have been brought from inflicting misery on others,  
what a "bad state of affairs" that this is what our society allows  
as it's "corporate services model."  
My feeling was of killing me was nothing but at least now  
appear to be broken, maybe that should be my sister living for  
the day.

Peter Phillip Nash  
E27926

Attention of the General Manager

I am writing to you to inform you of an incident that occurred on the 5<sup>th</sup> May 14 where I was the victim of an assault by GEO staff acting as what I understand to be the Special Response Team.

I have delayed sending you this letter for fear of further reprisals for my reporting of the incident, a copy of this letter has already been lodged with my solicitors.

On the date mentioned the centre was in lock down due to a roof top protest occurring somewhere in the prison. I was aware of a commotion occurring on my unit (B1) and observed a prison officer come onto the landing outside my cell and issue a warning of physical violence to anyone calling out. A few moments later the same officer was at my cell window accusing me of calling out and despite my emphatic protests to the contrary I was ordered to get on the ground which I complied with.

I was then smashed to the floor whilst being punched and kicked in the face, head and ribs. I was then handcuffed and dragged out of my cell; my head was forcibly brought into contact with the door frame and my arms were forced as far up my back as possible causing maximum pain and discomfort. At the time of writing this letter I am still in considerable discomfort with bruised ribs and numbness down my left forearm and hand.

This was an entirely unprovoked and violent assault, which if perpetrated by anyone else would be considered as a chargeable offence however as a prisoner I am expected to just accept this as what happens in jail.

Well I can assure you that I do not accept this and the actions of GEO staff are as far as I am concerned constitute gross misconduct and should be investigated. I am aware of several others who were also on the receiving end of similar treatment who are also in the process of raising their grievances.

By the time you read this I will have been extradited so will no longer be at risk of being bashed again. I trust you will take this matter seriously and act accordingly, my solicitor will be in contact in due course.

Yours sincerely,

  
Peter Nash

7<sup>th</sup> MAY 14



9 September 2014

The General Manager  
Arthur Gorrie Correctional Centre  
Locked Bag 1300  
SUMNER PARK BC QLD 4074

Dear Sir/Maam

**ASSAULT OF INMATE PETER PHILLIP NASH (E27926) BY CORRECTIONAL STAFF**

We are instructed by Peter Nash who was an inmate at AGCC during the earlier part of this year. On 5 May 2014 Mr Nash was viciously assaulted by GEO staff acting as the Special Response Team ('SRT'). Mr Nash was arbitrarily assaulted without reason and without provocation.

The purpose of this correspondence is to ascertain what investigations have been undertaken internally in relation to this assault and the many others occurred on that day and what steps have been taken to reprimand the staff involved and whether or not anything has been done on a procedural level to avoid similar incidents in the future.

Please respond to this correspondence at your earliest convenience.

Yours sincerely

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## Silk Road accused Peter Nash claims he was bashed in Arthur Gorrie prison

Tony Moore June 09, 2014



Protest at Arthur Gorrie Correctional Centre in Wacol. Photo: Seven News

Accused drug cartel go-between Peter Nash has now joined other prisoners who claim they were bashed by riot police during a May 5 protest at Wacol's Arthur Gorrie prison after protest against smoking bans.

Mr Nash was a prisoner in protective custody at the prison on May 5 where he was waiting for extradition to the United States to face money laundering and drug charges linked to the online site, Silk Road.

Silk Road was an online anonymous drug supply network that began in 2011 and was taken off line in 2013. Mr Nash is accused by US authorities of being one of the online moderators of Silk Road.

On Saturday, Fairfax Media reported details from an unsigned four-page report into the alleged bashings of prisoners at Wacol's Arthur Gorrie Remand and Reception Centre on May 5.

That report describes the riot squad guards' alleged actions against 36 prisoners in Protective Custody Unit B3 at the Arthur Gorrie Correction Centre on Ipswich Road, Wacol west of Brisbane.

Those allegations prompted Attorney-General Jarrod Bleijie to order the Corrective Services Department to investigate the complaint that prisoners were handcuffed and bashed inside the cells.

Now Mr Nash - who before being charged by US authorities worked as a Wacol prison psychologist – outlined the second account of the bashing allegations to his lawyer, Karl Brandon.

Mr Nash also wrote to Arthur Gorrie's Remand and Reception Centre's general manager Tony Ittensohn on May 7 but asked Mr Brandon not to forward his allegations until he was in the United States.

Mr Nash was extradited last week.

In his handwritten letter, Mr Nash alleged bashings began when riot squad officer moved through the Protective Custody Unit after the rooftop protest against smoking bans.

He said they came into his cell.

"I soon had around five screws giving me a good working over, punching me in the head, kicking and punching me in the ribs," he writes.

Mr Nash wrote he was handcuffed and taken to a holding cell with other prisoners who were "also seemingly picked on at random and beaten the shit out of."

Arthur Gorrie's Remand and Reception Centre's media spokesman Ken Davis initially described the bashing allegations as "pure bullshit."

However he said GEO would investigate when a second set of allegations emerged, which again centred on the time after the smoking ban on May 5.

"But we're still saying nothing happened," he said.

Mr Nash's Brisbane-based lawyer Karl Brandon said Mr Nash received "severe bruising to his ribs" and "two black eyes".

"He did not go to the hospital [for] medical treatment, because he feared reprisals. And I think, most of them in his position, did the same thing," he said.

Mr Brandon said Mr Nash was not protesting against the smoking ban.

"Definitely not. He was one of the people in B-Block in protection at the time," he said.

"And there was quite a few of them in that block who were assaulted."

Mr Brandon said five days later a witness noticed his black eyes and the bruising around his ribs.

Nash waived his rights to appeal against his extradition in a Brisbane court on March 19.

Mr Brandon – who is not representing Mr Nash over the assault allegations - said he wanted a full investigation into what happened at Arthur Gorrie Remand Centre on May 5 and 6.

"It would be great if the Queensland Government did do an investigation, but given their track record with being honest and forthright with the way they do things, I wouldn't be surprised if nothing happened at all."

Mr Bleijie announced an investigation on Friday.

Mr Brandon said a call to seize video footage inside Arthur Gorrie on May 5 and 6 - from Queensland Council for Civil Liberties vice president Terry O'Gorman - would not reveal bashings inside cells.

"In the cells themselves there is no video," he said.

"They are not stupid.

"But there is probably activity outside the cells, but that won't be anything of real value."

Mr Brandon said the letter to him about the alleged assaults was written several weeks before Mr Nash was extradited.

"He is happy to have his name used now, now that he is no longer in the jurisdiction. I think he was just fearful of reprisals," he said.

Mr Nash is accused of being paid between US\$50,000 to US\$75,000 a year by Silk Road to respond to customer service inquiries and resolve disputes between buyers and vendors.

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